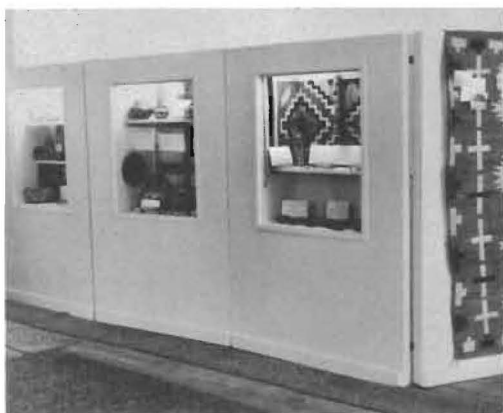


RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Newsletter

VOLUME III, No. 1

JANUARY 1973



The Society was extremely fortunate to receive out of the blue a superb collection of western Indian crafts, the gift of Ella Bean Livingston. Mrs. Livingston is shown, *left above*, as an army nurse in New Mexico over fifty years ago when she was actively building up her collection. One of the six cabinets of the exhibit is shown, *above right*. Mrs. Livingston is presently living at the Pleasant Manor Home on Nichols Street. Only a part of the Livingston collection is now on display; the remainder of the collection will be displayed during the year.

WINTER MEETING

Wednesday, January 10, 1973 — 7:30 P.M.

at the Museum 101 Center St., Rutland, Vermont

Francis Poulin, railroad buff of Schenectady, will present a slide show on the Wagner Parlor Car, made in Schenectady. William Seward Webb of Shelburne was president of the Wagner Company and president of the Rutland Railroad.

Because of space restrictions attendance at the meeting will be limited to members and their guests.

More dates to jot down:

January 8 and 9 at 7:00. Museum Committee will be preparing the Museum hall for our meeting on the 10th of January.

March 7 at 7:30. A slide show and orientation session for prospective guides to our walking tours. A committee is working on a brief history and explanation of each building on the tour and slides will be shown of each building or item of interest. Persons other than those willing to be guides are welcome but we hope everyone who attends will be raring to become a guide.

April 21. The Saturday before the trout season opens is a good time to help clean up an old cemetery—an out-of-the-way one in Rutland Town or West Rutland, perhaps.

Tentatively—October 17, our annual business meeting with election of officers.

All our activities are carried out by volunteers, including the staffing of the Museum during open hours (Thursday evening 7:00 to 9:00 and Sunday afternoon 2:00 to 5:00). The responsibility of enlisting hosts and hostesses is Miss Anna McDevitt's and her difficult job has been made easier by the co-operation of many members who have served the Society from the opening day to the time this Newsletter went to press:

Hostesses:

Louise Adams
Carolyn Allen
Miriam Bell
Dorothy Bruce
Joan Brunelle
Hazel Cady
Dorothy Covalt
Abigail Crawford
Helen Davidson
Elaine Davis
Teresa, Eleanor &
Cecilia Elwert
Ruth Fostman
Frances Frederick
Hope Hubbard
Erna Lamar
Janet McDonald
Anna McDevitt
Barbara Mellow
Shirley Perkins
Olga Ruppe
Ramona Sabourin

Marjorie Smith
Beryl Todd
Mrs. R. Wentzel
Dorothy Whitford

Hosts:

Ben Bell
Robert Brunelle, Sr.
Robert Brunelle, Jr.
George Covalt
Ben Crawford
Daniel Davidson
Joel Davidson
Martin Davidson
James Elwert
Ken Fisher
Leon & Paul Frederick
Napoleon Lamar
Tom McDevitt
E. E. Ruppe
William A. Sargent
Arch Todd

Membership goal for 1973: 300 members. That's almost double our present paid-up membership. Are your dues paid? And wouldn't a friend or neighbor want to join—if only he were asked? Dues are only \$2.00 per year. Of course, if you'd like to contribute an additional sum to help us meet our \$3000.00 budget we certainly would appreciate it. Dues may be paid at the museum or by mail to G. J. Covalt, West Rutland, Vt.

Report of Annual Meeting - October 25, 1972

The third annual meeting—and the first in our new home—was well attended by a capacity crowd of some 55 members. Due to the lack of room in the exhibit hall (which without exhibits can hold almost 100 people) the meeting was not announced publicly and was for members only.

After reports by officers and committee chairmen, nominations were presented by Nominations Committee Chairman, Sheriff Fred Carbine. The following slate was elected unanimously:

President: F. P. Elwert of Rutland City

Vice-president: Arch Todd of Rutland Town

Secretary: Lincoln Fenn of Rutland City

Treasurer: George J. Covalt of West Rutland

Directors for two year terms: Louise Adams of Rutland City

James S. Davidson of Rutland City

E. Farley Sharp of Rutland City

Mrs. Leon (Frances) Frederick of Rutland City was elected Director to a one year term to fill the vacancy on the Board caused by the resignation of Arch Todd who has been elected vice-president.

Brief sketches of new officers and directors:

Arch Todd is a beef cattle farmer, retired from most of the cares of the moving industry, and now is busy counting (and feeding) a herd of blooded polled Herefords.

Linc Fenn is head of the Department of Social Studies at Rutland High School and has the distinction of being one of the first adults in town to ride a bicycle.

George Covalt is a retired C.P.A. and keeps busy maintaining an old farmhouse on Boardman Hill.

Ed Sharp is a co-owner of Sharp Offset Printing Inc. and a researcher of the life of pioneer Methodist Bishop Francis Asbury.

Frances Frederick is a teacher and is co-ordinating the Society's school program.



School children and their teachers are always welcome at the Museum. Arch Todd conducts pupils of Mrs. Gilman and Mrs. King of Northeast School through the exhibits.

News of the Museum

Over 200 people have visited the Museum and reports are largely favorable. It didn't appear we would open the exhibits on time but opening day, August 20th, dawned bright and clear and the ceremonies moved along smoothly although the paint on the porch floor was barely dry.

Planning for future exhibits is one of our more pleasant jobs. Gifts such as the Livingston Indian Collection (see first page) take the pain out of planning but shift the work to the crew preparing the exhibits and display cases. The Livingston collection is so varied and large that we are now exhibiting only about one-half of it. The remainder will be displayed in the spring.

As soon as the Livingston Collection was housed attention was turned to the two large stained glass windows which the Rutland Free Library has been patiently storing on the third floor for almost 40 years. With the help of the young muscles of the Davidson and Elwert clan the two windows were eased down three flights of the library building and carried up Center Street to their present home. (See photo.)

The John Clement World War One diary with water colors has been withdrawn and in its place is a collection of bottles used by Rutland merchants during the past 100 years. Kenneth S. Fisher, an avid bottle collector, has loaned part of his collection for this exhibit. The Society has a few bottles in its own collection and welcomes any bottles with a local history.

The Fortnightly of the Grace Congregational United Church of Christ, through its president Mrs. Edmund L. Boyce, presented the Society with a fine studio portrait of the Fortnightly's most prominent member—Julia C. R. Dorr. Mrs. Dorr is probably one of Rutland's most famous citizens—and certainly its most illustrious woman. Mrs. Dorr's portrait is now on display and will be supplemented with other exhibits pertaining to her career as poet, novelist, and mother as material is presented or loaned.

The scarce 1850 map of the Rutland Railroad, the gift of Hermas Racine last summer, has been moved to a more prominent place on the north wall of the hall. This prized possession of the Society is the nucleus of a slowly growing collection of material about the Rutland Railroad and we expect to exhibit a comprehensive display of railroading near the end of 1973.

Plans for this spring include a display of the products of Rutland's most famous and oldest industry (name may not be divulged at this time—ed.) and one or more exhibits by some of the area high school students. Space and encouragement is offered to any students to work independently or with our committees on displays of their selection.

The Museum building itself has received first aid during the past half-year and this year will require more intensive repair and maintenance work. The foundation, the roof and the porch floor will need attention. An addition of a porch railing, clues to which are evidenced by old postcards of the building and the survival of several pickets from the railing will also be constructed. Electrical work continues as our electrician can spare us the time. Our present wiring is safe but not convenient or efficient.

The Prudential committee will have data on which to prepare a budget for our next year's operations as soon as we catch the drift of our heating and lighting costs. We expect our budget for the coming year will triple—from about \$1000 to \$3000, due to the operation of a 150-year old building on which maintenance has been deferred. We are looking for a broader base of financial support. Dues and gifts should provide us with at least one third of our income and we step up efforts to enroll more members—individual as well as institutional.

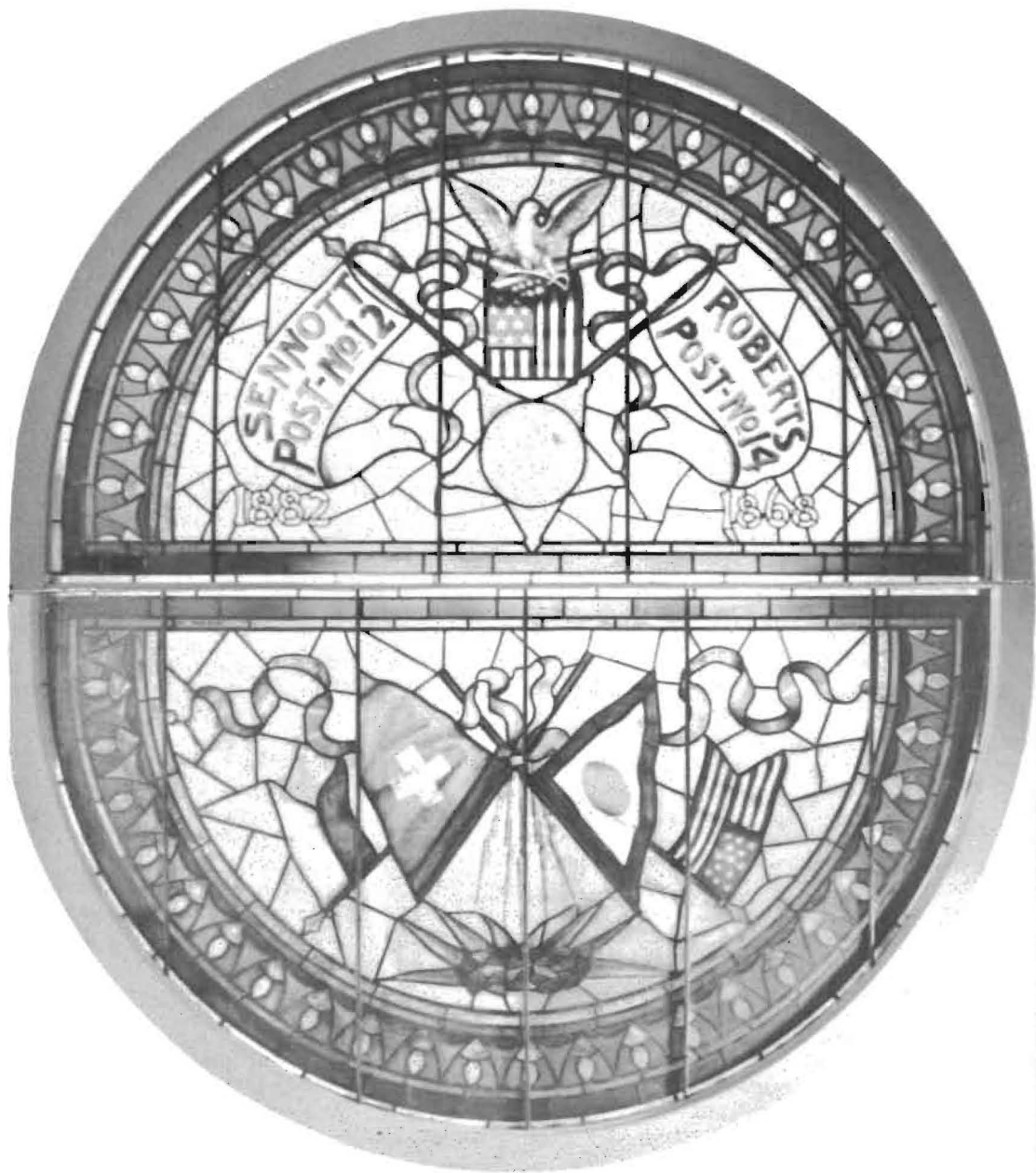
The museum is open Thursday evenings from 7:00 to 9:00 and Sunday afternoons from 2:00 to 5:00. The Society will be glad to open the museum to groups of whatever kind—school classes, clubs, skiing parties, etc.—on application to Miss Anna McDevitt, phone 773-3926. There is no admission charge.

The Newsletter has been mailed to over 400 people most of whom are members, civic leaders in Rutland City and Town, West Rutland and Proctor, local historical societies in the state and about one hundred people who we felt would be interested in our Society. Beginning with the next issue of the Newsletter we will mail it to members, civic leaders in the four communities and historical societies in the state and to those people who have signed the guest book at the museum. In addition we will increase our distribution to local schools, libraries and banks. If you are not now a member you can be sure of receiving future Newsletters by enrolling (\$2.00 for individuals and \$25.00 for organizations).

We have been running a historical society over the past three years at a cost of less than \$1000 per year. Now that we are operating a museum in the second largest populated community in the State our expenses will naturally increase—three-fold, in fact. We have been fortunate in receiving a grant of \$1000 yearly from the City of Rutland and expect to receive at least that much in the future. Our receipts from dues and gifts must increase in proportion. A realistic goal for 1973 is 300 individual members and twenty institutional memberships. Gifts of cash are always welcome and, of course, are tax deductible. We feel that the other communities making up the original town of Rutland might contribute grants in proportion to their population.



Interior of a Wagner Palace Car in the 1890's from "The American Railway." These ornate hotels on wheels will be the subject of our winter meeting, January 10th at the Museum.



Now on exhibit at the Museum . . . stained glass windows from Memorial Hall . . . stored in attic of Rutland Free Library for almost forty years. Sennott Post was from West Rutland; Roberts Post from Rutland.

Book Review

Archaeology in Vermont. Some Reviews Supplemented by Materials from New England and New York, Revised Edition. By John C. Huden. [Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1971. xiv, 107pp, illus., biblio. \$3.50]

Reviewed by Milford K. Smith, Vermont Archaeological Society

This book is one to which every student of Vermont history will refer until another revision in, say, ten years, will be necessary. John Huden, a former president of Castleton State College and a professor of English, compiled the studies of over a dozen archaeological digs in the state in his original edition and this work is the revision called for by more recent work. The limitations of this book should be clearly understood, however.

It is a study of native American, or Indian, life and will not be of help to collectors of the artifacts of the white man. Nor, really, is it intended as a manual for those who would like to dig for Indian artifacts. A serious reader of this book will readily understand that the value of excavating older civilizations is enhanced if the relationship of the various uncovered artifacts are minutely described in relation to one another both in terms of location but also in depth. By stratification we learn the ages of the various articles which is more important than just having possession of them.

Our own Rutland Historical Society is eager to conduct a dig at the site of an early Rutland industry or fort but realizes that it cannot and should not proceed to dig unless professional supervision insures that the necessary surveying, sifting, labeling and annotating is done.

Judge Smith besides his interest in Indian culture is a charter member and former director of the Society.

At the last meeting of the Board of Directors, A. J. Todd of Rutland Town was elected Chairman of the Board, succeeding F. P. Elwert.

Musing out loud—

Wondering what sort of treasures the Society could boast of were we to have been organized fifty or one hundred years ago is quite pointless. However, we occasionally give thought to the material peculiar to Rutland which might have been given to some institution in this broad land on the condition it revert to the Rutland Historical Society if, and when, such a society should ever be formed. Well, we are very much in business, so to speak, and now is the time to remind our friends that gifts and bequests are always welcome. The form for bequests is very simple:

I give and bequeath to the "Rutland Historical Society, Incorporated" the sum of dollars.

The year 1973 A. D.

Two local churches will observe anniversaries this year; St. Peters Roman Catholic Church was completed one hundred years ago this spring and, in West Rutland, the United Church, first established Congregational Church in the town, was organized in Center Rutland October 20, 1773, the Rev. Benajah Roots, pastor. The Society will join in the observance of these milestones in the pages of the Newsletter and in exhibits at the Museum.

In the absence of a calendar of dates it is almost impossible to learn of anniversaries far enough in advance to plan observances, so if any one knows of a date which should be observed in the next several years please let us know and Jim Davidson, chairman of the Research Committee, will post it.

The Walking Tour brochure which is now out-of-print will be revised and additional buildings will be included (the Museum of the Society, for one). At least one guided walking tour will be conducted this summer, the first on June 23.

An archaeological dig at the site of an early industrial plant under the guidance of Ken Fisher is planned. The brickyards on Mussey Brook or the paper mill at Mill Village are two promising sites.

The Camera Club of Rutland has expressed interest in photographing interesting buildings in the area and a list of such structures is being prepared. A by-product of this project might be the photographing in color of stained glass windows in the four town area.

Our summer meeting will be a trip to Old Sturbridge Village July 18, by chartered bus. Another possibility is a trip to Shelburne Museum by train, perhaps both.

The first scheduled event of the year is the slide show on the Wagner Palace Car, conducted by Francis Poulin of Schenectady. That's January 10 at 7:30 at the museum.

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
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